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## Mythril #1

Laura Ruskin

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# MYTHRIL

the mythopoeic fiction quarterly

fall 1971

NUMBER ONE



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Fiction Editor: Thomas Wilson  
Art & Humor Editor: Bruce McMenomy

# MYTHRIL

the mythopoeic fiction quarterly

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F.C. Paula Marmor  
B.C. Bonnie Bergstrom

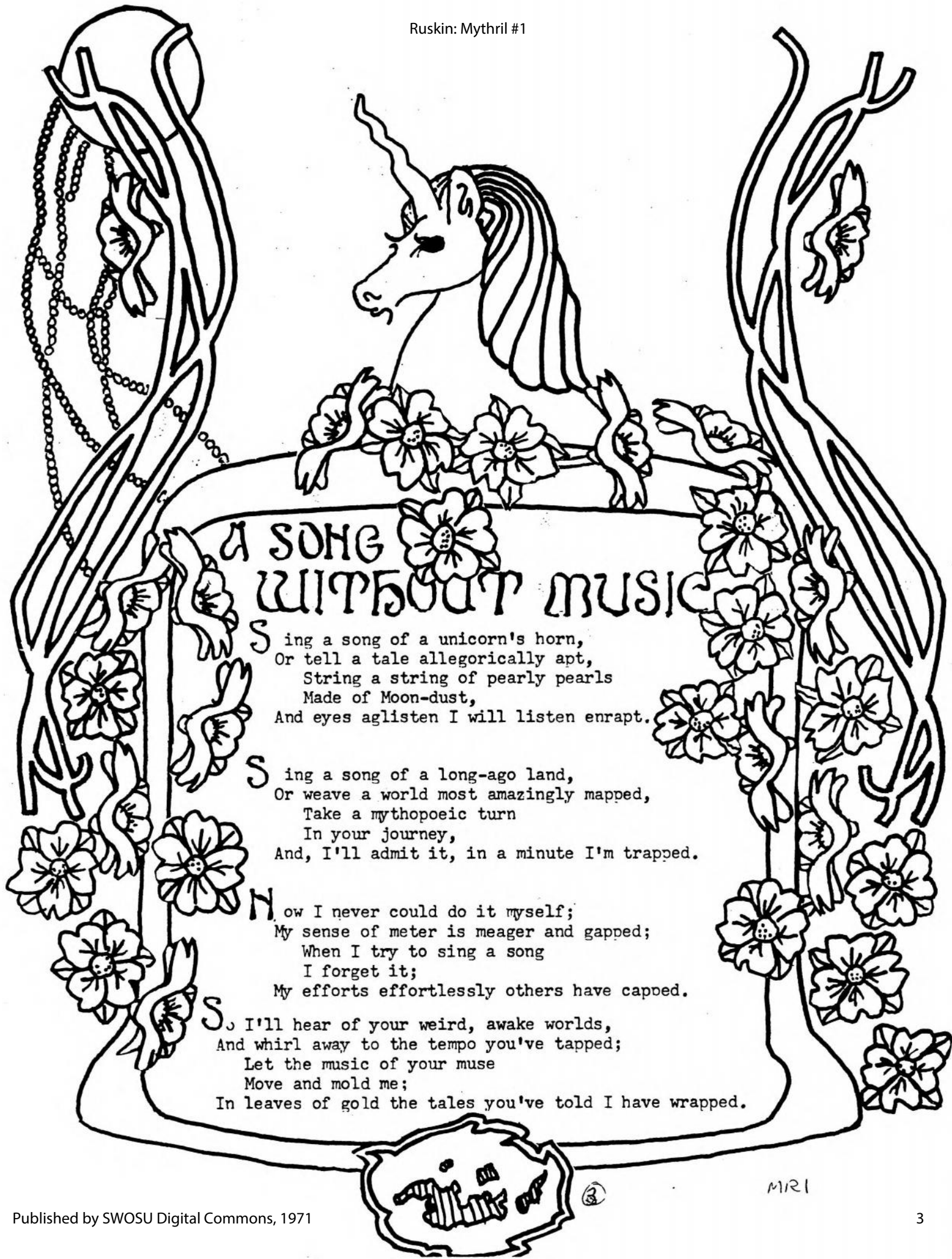
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self-addressed, stamped envelope. The publisher assumes no responsibility for unsolicited  
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## A SONG WITHOUT MUSIC

Sing a song of a unicorn's horn,  
Or tell a tale allegorically apt,  
String a string of pearly pearls  
Made of Moon-dust,  
And eyes aglisten I will listen enrapt.

Sing a song of a long-ago land,  
Or weave a world most amazingly mapped,  
Take a mythopoeic turn  
In your journey,  
And, I'll admit it, in a minute I'm trapped.

Now I never could do it myself;  
My sense of meter is meager and gapped;  
When I try to sing a song  
I forget it;  
My efforts effortlessly others have capoe.

So I'll hear of your weird, awake worlds,  
And whirl away to the tempo you've tapped;  
Let the music of your muse  
Move and mold me;  
In leaves of gold the tales you've told I have wrapped.



MRI



# INK STAND

## *Song of the Mother*

One of a series of Songs from Lirane (LEER-ah-nee), the fictional world of The Prince and the Rose, a new novel by the authoress of Good News from Tolkien's Middle-Earth.

Soft the golden light,  
the dawning of Lirial  
O'er the brown hills of Lirane.  
Warm falls the rain now.  
From the seed of the Rose  
All green life will grow.  
Love will fill  
the fields, the forests,  
the cities of Lirial  
All the live world of Lirane  
From the seed of the Rose.

--Gracia-Fay Ellwood

∞ This is the first issue of MYTHRIL, a nonprofit publication of The Mythopoeic Society through the special interest group Inklings II. We have put into it many interesting works: historical fiction with a mythopoeic twist, mythopoeic fiction with an historical twist, pieces which alarm, baffle or deeply move.

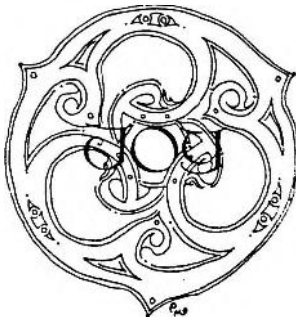
Many promising pieces have been read to our group; we hope to have them in future issues. We, the editorial staff, along with all the members of Inklings II, hope you find this first issue worth coming back for future issues. Any donations, over and above subscriptions, to MYTHRIL, Inklings II or The Mythopoeic Society are tax deductible.

--Thomas Luke Wilson, Fiction editor

∞ Welcome to MYTHRIL, featuring new mythopoeic fantasy literature, poetry, art and whatever comes to light through the Inklings II Writers' Workshop of The Mythopoeic Society. The term "mythopoeic" is Greek for "myth-making." J.R.R. Tolkien, for example, made a myth when he created the world of Middle-Earth in The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings. Our advice to prospective contributors: read this magazine to see what we publish; also read our other Society publications Mythlore and Mythprint for a clearer picture of what we're all about. Also, you must have your work read or shown at an Inklings II meeting. Our heart to you says: Enjoy! Enjoy!

--Laura Ruskin, Editor

The Mythopoeic Society



∞ The Inklings II Writers' Workshop was begun in February 1971. Its name came from the original Inklings group which met in Oxford in the 30's and 40's, a group nearly unique in literary history. Inklings II is a further working out of one aspect of the interests of The Mythopoeic Society. We have not named ourselves in a spirit of attempting to match the original group, but rather to attempt to emulate its creative influence on its members and its sharings of criticism within a framework of honest fellowship. We have not produced a Tolkien, Lewis, or Williams yet, but both the quantity and quality of Inklings II has surprised even me. Mythril was a natural outgrowth of the group. I hope it will be an interesting outlet for the abundant creativity for many people in The Mythopoeic Society.

--Glen GoodKnight, Executive Editor

∞ In his fanzine review column in the July 1971 Amazing, John D. Berry happened to mention "a lit mag's usual overabundance of poetry." Unfortunately, this attitude seems to be shared by a large portion of the reading public. While fantasy novels have often been liberally dosed with poetry, I can't help but wonder how many people skipped over Earendil and Gil-Galad, Luthien, and Durin in their haste to get on with Frodo's adventures; and how much their joy was decreased thereby! A resurgence in fantasy literature, if it would be a renaissance, must make room for poets and bards: and its followers must open their ears and their souls to the eldritch rhymes of Elrond's hall.

--Paula Marmor, Poetry Editor

## *The Cry of Rapunzel*

What traveller aye dar'd step  
Upon, across the golden grass  
And heard her high shrill cry  
And did not stop--

Dared turn to town and mart,  
To traffic trade  
From there he trod:  
In mind and mold forgot  
Until at mort?

-- J.R. Christopher

## *Ink Dribbles*

Dear Sirs!

Your story appearing in this issue of the publication I find sorely disappointing. Miss Sigman's version of her experiences fails to adequately express the virtues and excellencies of the hero. Adolescent enthusiasm, while pleasant enough, can actually blunt one's perceptions. Hence, I do not feel she did full justice to the events in question. I suggest Miss Sigman come to meet me, where we can discuss her reminiscences more fully. In the mean time, she should keep dreaming!

--R. Hood, Sherwood Forest

MYTHRIL is the literary quarterly of The Mythopoeic Society. The Society is incorporated as an educational and literary nonprofit organization, devoted to the study, discussion, and enjoyment of myth, fantasy, imaginative literature, and especially the works of J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, and Charles Williams. The Society is based on the idea that these authors provide both an excellent introduction to, and fundamental understanding of this entire genre of literature. The Society engages in activities which seek to engender interest and study by individuals and groups which lead to a greater understanding and integration of all aspects of the humane experience, as well as greater individual and social insight and creativity.

# JUNIPER HILL

by Tatiana Szeftel

"There was an old woman  
Lived under a hill;  
And if she's not gone  
She lives there still."

The rhyme has been sung to children from time out of mind, but few people now remember what the old woman was named, or where the hill was that she lived under. That they do not is hardly surprising, though a little sad, for the land has changed, and the people who lived there are gone, and the hill in question now goes by a different name. It used to be called, a long time ago indeed, Juniper Hill, and the woman who lived under it was Marjorie Silverseed. Marjorie did not actually live under the hill; she lived below it, or perhaps at the foot of it. Nor was she always as old as the rhyme implies. It was composed in a fit of inspiration by Bonny Bran Berrry, the famous bard of Southmarsh, when Marjorie was quite, quite old--ninety-seven, to be exact--and lived by herself in the thatched cottage. She was rather younger at the time this tale takes place, and quite a remarkable woman she was, too, though not so remarkable as her children.

Of them there were eight all told, and almost all were born on different days of the week: the two who were not were twins. Their names, in order of age, were Sylvia, Nicholas, Cynthia, Richard, Jennifer, John, and then Robin and Rosalind, who had the same age, having been born at the same time. In order of birthdays, the list runs quite differently. It lines up something like this:

Monday,	Sylvia
Tuesday,	Cynthia
Wednesday,	Jennifer
Thursday,	Nicholas
Friday,	Richard
Saturday,	John
Sunday,	Robin and Rosalind

But the Silverseed children had more to distinguish them than their birthdays. They had a spell: and there was a very good reason for that. Mr. Silverseed had been a magician. He had gone off on a mysterious voyage soon after the birth of the twins and somehow had never managed to send back a forwarding address, so eventually he was assumed to have drowned, or to have met with an unusually ferocious dragon, or whatever else was supposed to befall one when one embarked on a mysterious voyage. However, Mr. Silverseed had left a legacy to his children before he disappeared.

"Marjorie, my dear," he had said after the children were asleep, "I really feel that a spell would be the best thing."

Marjorie, who tended to view life in practical terms, had suggested a multiplication charm for the vegetables, or perhaps a modest crock of inexhaustible coins. Mr. Silverseed had raised his hands in horror and his eyebrows in dismay.

"Vegetables?" he cried, "Shillings? I will give them something lasting, something of value." He posed rather grandly at the end of this statement and flipped through his book of spells with an elegant forefinger.

"Much may they value it who may never live to see it," remarked Marjorie acidly, tugging at her tangled yarn.

Their garden had been uncharitable that year, and there was precious little to fill the six hungry stomachs of her older ones. And now here was her flibbertigibbet husband preparing to take off who knew where and leave his family to scrape for itself.

Mr. Silverseed looked hurt. "Ah, Marjorie," he sighed, "if only you could lift yourself to see beyond your daily needs."

He paused for a comment, but his wife made none. This was mud in an old puddle, and by now had gone past answering. Mr. Silverseed sighed again and took up the Book of Spells.

"Aha, here we are!" he cried after a moment. "A sneeze. One apiece, to be laid aside until their eighteenth birthdays."

He set the book down on the table and rubbed his hands, beaming.

"Eight sneezes--let me see," he murmured as he ran his finger down the recipe. When he was sure he understood the directions, he proceeded to call up the sneezes. (The recipe is not reproduced here, just in case. Sneezes can be troublesome if not handled properly.)

He caught them as they arrived, one by one, and popped them into a blue crockery jar that stood upon the mantel. When all eight were inside, he replaced the lid and stamped it with green sealing wax.

"There," he said, dusting his hands on his shabby gown, "that should do quite nicely. Find you," he turned to Marjorie, "that crock is not to be opened until Sylvia's birthday. She may have one sneeze, as may each of the others."

Marjorie continued knitting, her lips pressed together. Spells were bad enough, but sneezes! As if there weren't enough colds in the cottage already.

"Don't be angry, dear," said Mr. Silverseed, perceiving her mood. "Sneezes are better than wishes, after all, for a wish is made by the wisher, whereas a sneeze happens to the sneezer. This way each will get what is best for him. Magical sneezes always work out. Trust me."

He smiled encouragingly and disappeared, leaving behind a faint odor of mothballs. Marjorie, somewhat heartened (though not much) by her husband's reassurance, placed the crock on the mantel. And there it remained, tightly sealed, until Sylvia's eighteenth birthday.

☆☆☆

MR1





# The Legend of Loch Ness

## PROLOGUE

Long ago, in the days when the men we today call legendary were still walking the earth, there lived a young man named George Fiefield. Actually no one knew his real name, for he had been found by the widow Killison the morning after a cruel storm twenty years before this tale even began.

The good widow brought George up as her own and taught him the life of a sheep farmer on her small farm in Scotland. It sat high above the rugged coast line on a shelf of land that jutted out to the cliff's edge.

From the time George was able to walk about by himself, he had found a path from the edge of the cliff down to the ocean far below. He would sit and stare for hours, if so allowed, and wonder at the tales of the Sea Folk he had heard from the fishermen in the village.

George would have become a fisherman himself, but it was the Widow Killison's dying wish that he watch after the farm until he was "summoned." Exactly what this meant, no one was sure, but George obeyed.

And so, the young lad grew into a man, yet still his heart yearned for the sea he loved and still he spent his every free hour on the scalloped sands or rocky beaches, eyes eastward toward the Blue Depths.

## PART I

One night in April George Fiefield strolled along the Scottish Coast. A crystal ocean gently met the velvet sands and charcoal night skies shifted above him. A silky sea breeze played with his black hair. Lifting his ice-blue eyes from the foamy line, he looked out to sea. A soft grey mist was coming in. He focused upon something out from shore. It seemed to be a brightly lit vessel skimming across the waves, its delicate pink and green lights twinkling enchantingly. As it came closer, George could see that it was not a ship or even a small craft, but a lovely maiden being drawn in her giant sea shell chariot by twin sea horses. She was draped in a soft, sea-green gown and her long, sandy hair haloed her elfen face. Her skin was the glowing, live colour of the white ice of Sweden.

## or how George

"George," she extended a pearl studded hand to him, "Come with me, George Fiefield." Her voice flowed softly on the night air.

The sea horses bobbed impatiently, waiting for the return ride across the sea pasture.

George stood astounded. His eyes flashed over her. He had heard tales of sea fairies and Nevas, of course; what good Scotsman hadn't, but he had never expected that he would be approached by one.

"May I ask why I'm wanted?" he dropped his gaze as he approached her.

She smiled at him impishly. "No, not one question may you ask until we have reached the Great Castle Hall of far frey land. The answers might only bring self doubt or fear to you."

"You knew my name," he ventured as the fairy light danced in his eyes.

"And you shall know mine." She raised a hand towards the heavens and the sea rolled back, forming a path from George to the waiting Lady. "I am Shorala, Sea Fairy, Neva of the North Sea. I rule from the ocean floor to the sky above, from Sweden to England, from Belgium to the Great North."

George looked at the path before him. The water was curled up into shimmering walls of white and silver and blue on either side.

"Step in; don't be afraid," Shorala commanded. George took a hesitant step, then looking at the silent queen, he walked through the sandy floor to her side.

Shorala smiled again and took a golden necklace of a leaping dolphin from her own neck. Putting it on him she said, "Wear this and breathe the sea."

Suddenly, George found the air was choking him.

Then he mounted the chariot next to the Sea Queen. The sea horses turned and descended into the dark blue waters. When George discovered that he was no longer choking, but rather breathing, he understood the golden necklace of the Dolphin. He was able to breathe the water as air under the sea.

## PART II

George had not expected the water to be warm, but as he and Shorala skimmed along the ocean's floor, her long hair trailing behind them like a veil, he found the water to be as warm as the sunshine on a fine summer's day in the Highlands. He guessed the necklace had something to do with this too.

"The first Sea People you shall officially meet are the Starfish," she told him.

At first, George was amazed at how well he could see and hear under the water as he listened to Shorala sing a song of ocean life. The further they went, the lighter the water seemed to become, but he could think of no logical reason for this.

The sea horses came to a halt before a patch of white sand. George helped Shorala out of the chariot and they proceeded to the edge of the patch.

"Wise Star Fish," Shorala called, "Our Young Prince is here to meet you."

George glanced at her questioningly. She smiled at him, then turned to the old wise Star Fish, who had just come out from his hole. His two young assistants bowed shyly to Shorala and George.

"Well...yes," Wise Star Fish nodded as he viewed George, "But is he Cunning and Wise? These are most important."

## Fiefield became

George bent down to the Wise Star Fish. "I can see by your speech your name is proper and just," he spoke, trying to sound as polite as possible. "If you would be willing and wanting to test me, I would be most glad of it, for I, most of all, would not want to be unworthy."

Shorala touched his hand.

"Well...yes," Wise Star Fish adjusted his spectacles and put a leggy to his head so as to think better.

"I believe," Wise Star Fish began, "that a riddle," he said, "is in order."

Young Fiefield quickly agreed; a riddle would be most appropriate.

"Fine. Well...yes," Wise Star Fish had remembered a riddle, "Ready?"

Nodding, George looked to Shorala. He hoped her enchantment would bring him luck.

Wise Star Fish began:

"I am a thing most fine.

I am something that's done.

I am done in the air and

I help do something in the sea."

Wise Star Fish sat back to show he was finished. This quite muddled George. He tried to figure

out what the Wise Star Fish was talking about and was just about to give up, when he spied a sail fish winging its way high above him.

"I know," he spoke up happily, "You're a Sail. You sail in the air and a sail makes boats go on the water."

Wise Star Fish was quite astonished that George had guessed the answer. He knew that George could not have heard that riddle before, for he had just



## a serial

by Sharon Wells

made it up that morning.

"Ah, but you weren't fair," Shorala said with a grin. "We all know that you can also sail on the sea as well as in the air. Your riddle should have said, 'I am done in the air and on the waters.'"

"Well...yes," Wise Star Fish muttered, "Must remember that. But, one more easy riddle before you go."

Shorala nodded and Wise Star Fish smiled as best a starry fish can.

"I am," said he, "quite useful for legal papers and such, But, on the beach I am not, for I talk too much."

"Oh, that is easy," Shorala nodded. George looked puzzled, but just for a moment. "You're seals," he said.

Wise Star Fish nodded and then said, "You are wise."

"Thank you." George bowed as he prepared to leave. "But, no one shall ever be as wise as you, Wise Star Fish, I'm sure."

The old star fish beamed gratefully.

"May your starry brothers in the sky watch over you and may tides be favorable to you," Shorala called as she mounted her chariot next to George, for that was the proper farewell.

"Well...yes, and to you," Wise Star Fish called out.

The sea horses were off once again.

"Now we shall go to the shoal's meeting place," Shorala pointed far ahead, "Granny Herring could not bear missing you. She loves to hear a Scottish voice or to hear a fine Scottish tale."

## Prince of

"She sounds like a lady of good taste," George commented as they came floating down outside the home of Granny Herring.

There was a large circle of abandoned sea shells. Within, on a mound of sand, sat Granny Herring, the oldest fish of the North Sea. Round about her sat her large and numerous family. She beamed when she looked up to see George helping Shorala out of the chariot.

"Well, at first glance ye look well mannered," she called over, "But, I cannot speak to ye," she said, "until we be properly introduced."

"Lady Herring, this is George Fiefield, soon to be Prince; George Fiefield, Lady Herring," Shorala presented George to the elderly Lady Herring.

"An honor to meet such a great lady." George bowed so low that Granny Herring thought his black hair would touch the sands.

"And I am glad to meet you, son. We've been waiting for you for a long, long time."

George didn't understand what she meant, but he politely agreed to stay for a short chat.

As Shorala had expected, Granny Herring asked for a Good Story, which was natural, for her. So George told the story of how Merlin, the Great Magician, was first heard of in Scotland and how he and Saint George slew a dragon on Scottish soil. George would have gone on to tell how the famous Scotsman, King Arthur, first founded Camelot, in Scotland, of course, but Shorala reminded him that it was time to go.

"It's sorry I am to have to go and leave such a lovely lady," George bowed and moved his hand in a farewell gesture.

"And we're a'being sad to see ye go," she agreed, "You have proven yourself most well mannered," she continued, "and very Good Company."

George thanked her graciously and he and Shorala were off again through the magical waters for their

last stop, the castle.

Shorala didn't have to tell George when they were a'nearring the Castle; he could hear the tunes of the Gypsy Mermaids and Mermen. Their brightly painted wagons were gathered in a circle of bright light and several of them were playing violins and singing as two dancers swirled about the camp site.

As the Royal Chariot passed over the magic circle, a cry of welcome rose up to greet Shorala and George. They called out to him by name and wished him well.

"But, they know my name." He could not understand.

"Gypsies have ways," Shorala explained as they rode down into an emerald port hung with pink and crimson sea weed.

"Is this the...?" George cut off, remembering he was not supposed to ask questions.

The door had opened into a long archway where lavender and mauve sea weed had joined the pink and crimson and the passage seemed very gay indeed.

Shaking their manes with the joy of their return, the twin sea horses proudly brought the chariot into a wide open court. The walls were hung with flags woven of living sea flowers. Statues of mermaids and land men stood about the grounds, pearls about their heads, rubies and diamonds glittering from their eyes.

"This way," Shorala took George by the arm. He looked down at her, wanting to ask about the statues of men. Why would they be here under the sea?

Shorala took him through a door made of thousands of small yellow-gold shells.

"You shall now meet the Great Council of the North Seadone, and now all shall be explained," Shorala told George as they climbed some steps, "If you then have any questions, they shall answer them for you."

"Thank you," he said, "But, I hope you shall be there."

She laughed lightly as he spoke and reached out a slender white hand for the handle of a golden door which they now stood facing. Her laughter bounced off the white crystal walls and echoed all about them on the ivory-like steps. George reached ahead and opened the door for Shorala, allowing her ahead of him, then he stepped in after.

As they entered several men--some dark and burly, some fair and elven, some old and some young--and

## Skul Skerrie

ladies; some young and fairy-like, some looking like aged sooth-sayers, rose from their places at the Great Table and saluted their Queen:

"Hail, Shorala, Queen of Skul Skerrie."

She nodded majestically to them as she rose to mount her throne of flowers and jewels at the end of the room.

George felt a sinking at his stomach. He was realizing too many things at once. They had called this place "Skul Skerrie." Every Scotsman knew that Skul Skerrie was the home of the Silkie and that Silkies were the people who lived under the seas doing good for man and animal. It was rumoured that every hundred years a Silkie would go ashore and he or she would have one day only to see how men had changed before they went back to the sea. There, in the ocean's depths, Silkies could take on the appearance and form of seals or men, at will, whichever suited their needs most at the time. George also realized how important his presence must be if the very Queen of Skul Skerrie had come in person to summon him. Her words of introduction

(continued on p. 15)

MR1

# Lines on the Death of Robin Hood

The silver horn of Huntingdon  
thrice through yestereven's hush  
haunted Sherwood's hawthorn dusk  
and set the hazels shuddering  
uneasy pines stood sheltering  
above the shadowed forest eaves  
the evening's flush paled  
through the trees  
and autumn's end passed fleetingly

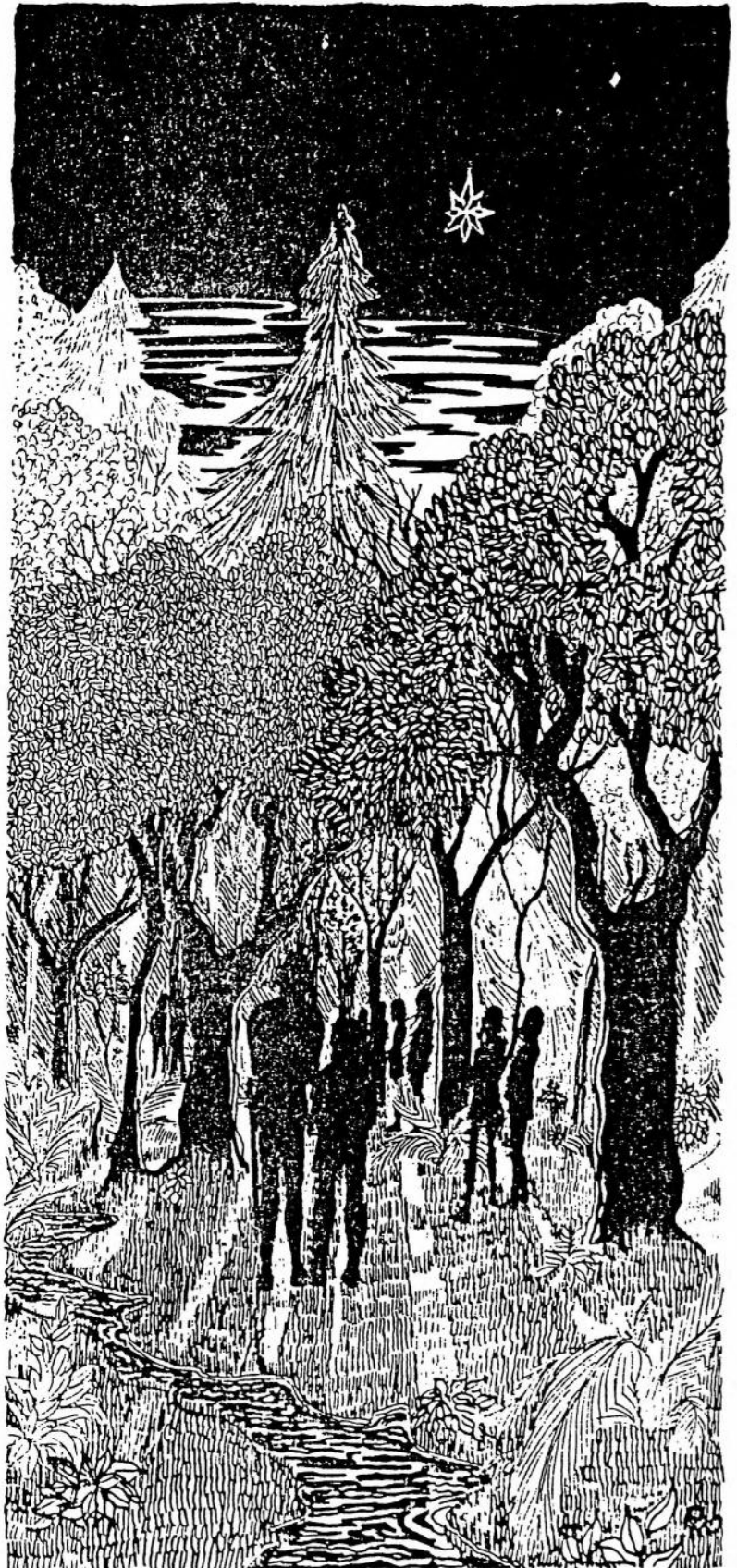
Orwendil's stars rose glistening  
as winter's birthwind  
stirred the firs  
the York road pounded to the dirge  
of yeomen northward journeying  
the midnight's breath moaned  
mournfully  
and faltered in the final miles  
within the moss-draped  
pillared aisles  
around the vine-meshed priory

Fitful stars shone flickering  
the forest whispered: soft and thin  
the rustling in the ruffling wind  
of frost-encrusted bitterthorn  
and barren oak trees clustering  
like cloistered brothers  
garbed in brown  
beneath the gaunt and broken  
boughs  
and gabled branches towering

The order clad in Lincoln green  
was gathered in the hallowed glade  
in hollow glen was legend laid  
as men wept unashamedly  
and in the glassy morrow dim  
the footsteps of dispersing men  
fluttered like the pulse of death  
in empty Yorkshire echoing

Myth flows through the hickories  
where history's mist lies  
thick and cold  
and floods the musty quicken holts  
and aspen copses ghostly grey  
the greenwood tomb is overgrown  
with holly leaves and prickly thorn  
that graven was on holy morn  
to hold the fallen forest king.

Paula Marmor  
10/28 June 1971



MRI

They have found it. I'd long forgotten it. I suppose it's nearly a thousand years old now. It's a wonder they were able to identify it, much less date it. Remarkable, these archaeologists. My watch. How that confounded them! They were sure I was a sorceress. I smile just to think... Oh, I'm sorry. I'm forgetting you don't know the story...

It was many years ago, when I was a young girl... I was still going to school at the time. Summer of 1971, I think. Yes, that's it. I was vacationing in Europe, traveling on my own. In England I joined a tour group that was going to Nottingham. I wanted to see Nottingham, and Sherwood Forest. You know, I believe I was half in love with Robin Hood then... or at least with the ideals he represented and the image that the romantic poets had created...but I'm straying. Anyway, we went to the town called Nottingham.

It was really a city by then, with paved streets and many new buildings. I couldn't even begin to picture a twelfth-century town, it was so...new. However, I still had Sherwood ahead. Surely it couldn't have changed! Yet it had. The town of Nottingham had grown beyond its walls, right up to the edges of the shrunken forest. Yes, it had dwindled from the great woods of many days' journey to a small, insignificant bit of green. Not at all like the Sherwood of the ballads, the legends... certainly not like my Sherwood. I could see the tops of the buildings, and their very structures from my viewpoint near the centre of the woods. It was very depressing.

We were given an hour or two break for lunch, but I couldn't eat. I stayed in the forest, if one could call it a forest, and tried to imagine the Sherwood of long ago. But every time I looked around me, I got so depressed I began to cry. I closed my eyes. What was that? I thought I'd heard a noise--very faint--in the distance. I quickly looked round, but it was nothing. Again I closed my eyes, and again I heard it--a sound of horns--of hunters' horns. I looked around again, yet I saw no one.

"You fool," I said to myself. "You silly romantic fool. Thinking you heard a horn. Robin's, no doubt." And once more, I closed my eyes.

And still again I heard the sound, only louder, and resounding through the forest. My eyes flew open! Still I saw no one, yet...yet something was different! The light! It was darker, and colours of the forest seemed richer. And I felt very small. And I felt--you know how it feels--watched, watched by someone whom I couldn't see.

Suddenly he was standing before me: a giant of a man, well-near seven feet tall, dressed in Lincoln green. I don't have to describe him; you know him well enough.

I looked at him and thought, "You've got to be kidding. Little John, no less. Boy, when you go nuts, you do it with class!"

He spoke. I can't repeat to you what he said, for he spoke in the twelfth-century dialect. Yet strangely enough, I understood him. And more strangely, when I responded, I too spoke in Old English. I certainly astonished myself. Yet it seemed very fitting and natural. I was not aware of the change in language until my spoken words hung in the air. I thought as I normally did, if one thinks in words, and made no effort to convert our speech into theirs. It just happened.

Poor John didn't know what to do. He wasn't sure what I was. I guess they didn't see too many girls with short hair in those days, nor wearing pantsuits...I really must've bewildered him...but he was definitely sure I wasn't supposed to be there. He and Much, the Miller's Son took me back to the main camp, where I awaited Robin's return, like a prisoner waiting for the judge...but with a great deal more eager anticipation. At this point, I didn't care if it was a dream, or more likely, an insane hallucination--I was going to enjoy it.

About four o'clock Robin came back. I knew him the moment he came into view. He was almost exactly the way I'd pictured him...a little taller, though. Dark hair, sun-stained skin, the very essence of health, youth, vitality--with a pinch of insolence thrown in for good measure. He couldn't have been anyone else. There was something about him that proclaimed his leadership...it was almost visible. He was...but you can imagine him yourself. I'll go on.

# Lost in Sherwood

by Paula Sigman

~~~~~  
It took me a long time to convince them that I wasn't a sorceress, but just a girl. I did not try to tell them that I was from another time; it was just too incredible. Even I wouldn't have... I didn't believe it. I was also rather nervous, in awe of this man...I think it was my insecurity that finally assured them that I was harmless.

That night...ah, that night I ate by campfire and slept in the open air. The next morning they held a shooting exhibition. Really, they were like little boys, vying for the next shot, always showing off. But no one could top Robin, when he chose to shoot. He was magnificent.

I stayed for about three weeks...three glorious weeks. I learned--really learned--to shoot, and I wandered around the forest dressed in Lincoln green. I heard stories and songs of their strangest adventures, and delighted in their tales of outwitting the Sheriff of Nottingham. He came to dinner once, not quite willingly, you know. Perhaps I should say he was brought to dinner.

We had the most marvelous meals--fresh meat and fish, and even fruit! And the most ravenous appetites. I can even now smell the venison roasting on a spit in the open air. It was wonderful. And after dinner we'd sit around the fires and sing. Did I tell you that Robin had a beautiful voice? But he didn't sing often, except in rounds. Allan-a-Dale sang mostly. Sometimes lovely, romantic ballads...but more often than not, the lustiest and bawdiest songs you have ever heard. At first, the men were a little inhibited because I was there, but as the days wore on, and I, dressed like them, hunted with them, they accepted me as one of them. I really belonged.

And most wonderful of all...I was in love.

You remember...I told you that I had been half in love with Robin even before I met him. Knowing him, it was impossible not to love him. His men, respecting him--even acknowledging him as their king--loved him. No man, on the basis of his authority alone, could have commanded the loyalty and devotion that Robin's men held for him. And I, too, loved him. I believe I still do. I shall...well, never mind. I'll go on. Gloriously my love was not unrequited. Oh, joy, he loved me!

Friar Tuck posted the banns that third Sunday. We had a splendid feast and much celebration. You know, I would have been content to stay and live out my life in that twelfth-century forest.

The following Wednesday I woke up with a sense of uneasiness...of foreboding. It was market day, and I was to go to Nottingham. I didn't want to go. I tried to communicate my sense of fear to Robin, but he just laughed and said it was my nerves. But it wasn't. I felt--I had a feeling that if I left that forest, it was to be forever--that if I returned, it would not be in that time.

There was also this--this aura of inevitability about it. There was no way I could escape it.

I dressed in the clothing of a common peasant girl, and set out with Much and Will Scarlet. I said farewell to the men--and to Robin, and I think then that he felt it, too, for he started to call me back. I turned around...he looked uneasy. Then he shrugged, and his eyes again shone with that special light that was his. He again was Robin Hood, fearless outlaw and master archer...and...well, you know. He waved us on.

I remember him, standing there as if he owned the world. And he did, in a sense...the world of Sherwood. A world to which I can never return. But it was, for a while, mine.

(continued on page 12)

MR1



## Willowwind

Soft, the whisper of the rills  
 Wafted on the willowwind  
 Sighs, and splashing washes, spills,  
 swirls among the vesper leaves  
 follows down the Evenstar  
 to settle in the western sea

'Ware the steps that scatter echoes  
 where the sister-weirds do dance  
 stamping down the past in shallow  
 graves whose craven tombstones stare,  
 spinning patterns for the present,  
 pacing future's sojourn there

Seven seasons come and go  
 like shifting shores of Lyonesse,  
 like gossamer when westwinds blow:  
 The spring has blossomed on the heights  
 and wild swans wing their passage home  
 through honeysuckle-jasmine nights

The restless many-masted schooner  
 rides at anchor on the sea  
 silvered in the sinking moonlight  
 where the sapphire star-clouds spin  
 waiting for her captain's call  
 to fill her sails with willowwind.

--Paula Marmor  
 12-16 May 1971



## Snow White

|                          |                           |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Seven small dwarves      | silently peeping          |
| from the berrybushes out | with their eyes ablink    |
| (their whiskers twisted  | as an unicorn's mane),    |
| peeping at the person    | who sat in their pathway, |
| raven-locked lady        | weeping and forlorn,      |
| sobbing in their forest, | tresses a tangle,         |
| holding her apron        | in front of her eyes.     |

|                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Then softly and silently | crept they up to her, |
| whispered the world      | was none so wry,      |
| moonlight and sunlight,  | alternately mingled,  |
| ancient trees            | and old deep mines.   |

|                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| Still she was weeping, | weeping in their forest, |
| holding her apron      | in front of her eyes.    |

# the CONQUEROR

by Laura Ruskin

11

◆ Disdainful of the sullen mob, General Cortez rode out to inspect the place of execution. His polished steel armor caught the noonday sun in a mirror of darkness. With a soldier's eyes he saw that his men of the Vera Cruz halberdiers had deployed around the plaza in more than enough strength to suppress any disturbance. To make sure, he signalled for the cannon to be rolled in.

"No mere witch-burning this," he thought. "On this sixteenth day of Septiembre, in the year of Our Lord Fifteen Hundred and Twenty-Four, we kill a god!"

Cortez knew the Indian mind as only a conqueror can. The empire of the Aztecs had crumbled stone by stone before him. Now these Mexicas must see their living god, Quetzal-'Coatl in the flesh, put to death before them. Only then would they truly accept Spanish rule.

After the cannons, the guarded oxcart came, its great wheels groaning on their axles of wood. The living god stood tall, his face as composed as if he were visiting friends, his form garbed in the sulfur-shirt and foolscap of the condemned.



Cortez rode to meet the cart before it entered the square. His captive greeted him by a courteous smile. Passing the audience-box where the city's dignitaries were seated, Cortez saluted with his sword. The show today would have a new touch. According to the custom of the country when burning captives, he himself intended to bind this "god" to the stake.

"Quetzal-'Coatl! Quetzal-'Coatl!" The chant from the front rows as the Indians beheld him was swiftly taken up by those pressing behind. Thousands of dark, pinched hands reached out to him as the cart rolled into the square.

The victim spoke softly to Cortez. "I pray you, unbind my hands, that I may bless them and bid them farewell."

Cortez shook his head. "You think they'll save you? Not a chance!"

Quetzal-'Coatl looked out over the stirring, murmuring mob. "I hope you are right. If they tried, it would be slaughter."

Only a few yards to go. The cart was passing within the circle of cannon. Then, like a storm out of a tropical afternoon, the crowd burst loose.

Cortez' first warning was an ominous growl from the mob. He twisted in his saddle. A club was thrown from the mass of Indians. Other clubs appeared, then axes and stone knives. The Mexicas raising their war-screams flung themselves on the wall of Spanish lances. Some gathered three or four points into their own chests to make space for others behind. From all sides they poured into the square, whistling and crying Quetzal-'Coatl's name. The musket-horsemen tried to head them off, but volley after volley could not stop them. Men while reloading were pulled from their mounts. Now only the six cannon loaded with scatter-shot stood between their fury and the cart.

"Cut my bonds!" commanded the prisoner.

"Hurry! Let me quiet them, or you and all your men are dead!"

Cortez flashed his sword at the other's throat.

"Then first you shall die by this Cartenaga steel!"

The prisoner's eyes blazed strangely. "I ask for no escape, only a chance to stop this. But I must have my hands free if I'm to do it."

Though awed by an almost-palpable force in the man's words, Cortez replied with a hard and level look. "You will not try to escape the stake?"

"I will not. Ya khe Ra."

Cortez had to decide quickly, and did. The Spanish blade rose, and with a bright sweep of steel bit deep into the wrist-cords.

As a bird will spread its wings to the sunshine, so Quetzal-'Coatl lifted his hands toward heaven, turning slowly, letting his people see the gesture.

Within moments every Mexica dropped to one knee.

Those wounded ceased their groaning and turned with looks of trust to the figure in yellow. Not only did the Spaniards, looking with amazement over their shoulders, pause from the battle and step back; some of them even knelt like the Indians at the command of peace.

A bewildered Cortez whispered, "It's a miracle!" During that brief interval which after a battle permits compassion for the fallen, Quetzal-'Coatl spoke to his people in the Aztec language.

Cortez, suspicious, summoned the lovely Lady Marina to interpret. She ran to him through brief gazes of contempt from the bowing Mexicas, and rapidly translated.

"He says not to fight any more, to throw down all the weapons and go back. He says that he feels every blow and bleeds in his soul from every wound. He says--he reminds them how he always taught them to keep peace and be gentle and live as brothers. He wants them to do that, even when he is not with them. He says that their life may get worse, but that in time it will get better. He says that there will come a day of no more conquerors, no more slaves, but only brothers living in peace. He says he will return to them someday, as he has ever done, in the sunrise of a new age. He wants them to have peace--to live in peace--until then."

When Quetzal-'Coatl lowered his arms, the people rose to stand quietly. The soldiers regrouped their lines. The executioners let down the tail of the cart crunching into the dry wood around the stake. The prisoner stepped out with a king's bearing, climbed to the stake and backed up against it. There he waited with arms crossed and eyes fixed upon the noon sun.

In casting on the chains, Cortez for honor's sake left the prisoner's hands free. "There is no one to hear us, nor anything to gain from pretenses. Do you really think you are immortal?"

Quetzal-'Coatl jesting remarked, "And do you really think that you are not? Ah, but what is life, after all? Can time or flesh bind it?"

Cortez replied with a growl. "I'm no philosopher; I am a soldier, but I know what death is. How many have I seen fall in battle--on the march--"

The prisoner, after pausing to think, asked, "And what then?"

"Why--" said Cortez, shrugging, "we buried them and marched on."

"Even so," stated Quetzal-'Coatl. "After death, life goes on."

The disk of the sun turned to blood in the pupils of the condemned man's eyes. In them, Cortez suddenly beheld--he knew not what. Some unreachable height, some abyss--he spurred his horse away from the stake.

The hooded executioners, at their commander's impatient, "Get on with it!" ran to fling their torches upon the dry brushwood. Threads of smoke appeared, then the brightness of flames.

Lifting his hands, the condemned man sang. Softly began the song of Quetzal-'Coatl, like a faraway piping in the shade of afternoon. Then it swelled, became agitated, catching aflame the parched leaves of autumn. Again it changed, to a spare and serene nobility, a calm beyond endangering.

"I do not know this tongue," confessed Lady Marina to Cortez, who had joined her. "It must be that in which the gods converse with one another."

She still believed in the ancient gods? But Cortez' anger did not speak aloud, prevented perhaps by the tears in her eyes, or by the melody.

It sang now, in the midst of death, with all the goodness and beauty in life. It rose beyond the highest pitch a man could hear. The victory-scarred soldier shivered in his armor. The unheard song went on; the hands hovered steady above the conflagration.

For a moment Quetzal-'Coatl's hands trembled, then like pierced birds dropped from sight into the smoke. The fire sprang to claim its kill.

Cortez rubbed his smarting eyes. "Santa Maria have mercy! We have killed a god!"

MR1

# THE MEETING

by Lyne Motis

Tiny rivulets of light streamed from the great black horse as it danced impatiently, and once again its strange rider addressed himself to the terrified farmer at his feet.

"Has another dressed and fashioned in array similar to myself, passed this way? Answer at once, and do not lie."

The farmer partially conquered his fear, and gazing into the iron eyes of his questioner he replied, "My Lord, I am merely a humble farmer, who knows nothing for himself. But rumor spreads from the next village down of a God; half-man, entirely clothed in shining white robes; as bright as yours are dark. His horse was white with silver hoofs and deep burning eyes of fire."

Here the giant horse rose high in the air and snorted.

"Yes," continued the farmer, "His eyes were said to be like to those in your beast's head!"

The black horse turned toward the farmer at this and stared at him strangely. His eyes blazed deep like a demon's.

"This man," the farmer went on, "if man he be, waits and broods on the mountain behind Aster, which is the next village I spoke of. He too is said to have inquired after others."

The rider of the black horse wore a look of desperate hope and longing at this information. "And this village, how far is it, and in which

direction? Tell me quickly and no harm will come to you," he shouted at the farmer, who quivered and directed him.

With abrupt violence the ebony horse rose high in the air and began to gallop toward the peaceful village of Aster.

"We shall not be late," said his rider.

But the horse's eyes only burned deeper and he quickened his pace a bit. Soon they passed the quiet farms and humble buildings of Aster itself. From the low hill behind it glimmers of white fire shone from time to time, as if reflected from silver hoofs. The black horse reached the hill and plunged up. Neither the black horse and iron rider, nor the ivory horse with rider in purest shimmering white that they found there, paid each other the slightest notice.

Only the rider in white whispered, "It improves. There is but one lacking."

Softly the dawn began to light the sky, and the fierce stars gentled. Suddenly a large star that shone gold in the birth of the dawn fell across the sky. Its golden glitters made a path through the night which the two horsemen, now three, gazed on in speechless rapture.

"He, like us, did not forget," said the rider in black. "It is well and fitting. We are complete. Let us now begin."

## Lost in Sherwood

from p. 9

In Nottingham we split up, agreeing to meet later near the big well. I did some marketing, and then went to a...I suppose you'd call it an apothecary shop. And as I entered, again this horrible feeling of inevitable loss came over me...stronger this time, and even painful. I wanted to cry. But I didn't.

When I came out of the musty little shop... I don't know...I wanted to run back in...I knew it had happened. I'd stepped out into a different world...a world of paved streets and automobiles and tall buildings. The world of the twentieth century. And as I stood there, the tears came. I don't know how long I wept, but eventually I was taken to the nearest police station. At first they thought that I was crazy--I was still wearing twelfth-century clothing. Then they identified me as the American female who had been missing for three weeks.

They put it down in the official records that I had been kidnapped, and obviously lost my memory. My "wild story" was attributed to the great strain I had supposedly been under. I was sent back to America.

I tried to tell people. I told my friends and my family, but no one believed. I told people in an organization called the Mythopoeic Society... and I think that they wanted to believe, but...

I went back to school, desolate and inconsolable. I tried to study, but I could not devote myself to my work. Then, finally, winter break came...we were on the quarter system then...and I had a few weeks off. I went back to England...back to Sherwood.

I stood again in the forlorn woods. It was winter now, and the few trees that were left were barren of green finery. There was nothing there to suggest the Sherwood that I knew. Yet I listened...desperately I listened for the sound of hunting horns, for the sound of familiar laughter, for the sounds of Sherwood long ago. No sounds came to delight my ear, nor gladden my heart. The forest was sterile and silent. My Sherwood was gone, lost to me forever. And I wept.

And now they've found it. They've unearthed my long-forgotten timepiece. I'd given it to Robin, it delighted him so. And now they wonder...they who wouldn't believe me...for the watch has a manufacturing date on it...1970. The article says it is well-preserved. Another freak of time, perhaps. And it shall be officially noted as an unsolved mystery...the finding of a twentieth-century watch among the ruins of a twelfth-century campsite. But I know.

### FESTIVAL SONG

O Lirial, Lady fair,  
Garlands and dancing,  
Wine and rejoicing  
Greet your return again;

O give us your golden hair;  
Borne on the wind  
It blesses our land  
And living is all Lirane.

Wherever our Lady rides  
Banished is winter  
Fragrant the breezes  
Gentle the silver rain;

Wherever our Lady rides  
Green grow the meadows  
Rosy the apples  
Golden the fields of grain.

Songs from Lirane  
by Gracia-Fay Ellwood

MR1



# THE FORGING

by Bruce McMenomy



Falthir the smith always prepared his metals with care. That is how his fame had grown; so at least it was that he had told Kthun, his apprentice. A mighty wielder of the hammer was he, but his true craft and art in the management of the powerful Algethi runes was his glory. He was a master of them all; with fire-hardened scribe he graved them. Into the bare stock he cut the beaten-runes to be hammered into the hot steel: forge-runes they were, and hardening-runes, and fire-runes and temper-runes. With heavy hammer-fall then he would strike shape to a blade; then sword-runes, runes of fear and blood he would scribe there, runes to cut the battle-tides with mighty stroke. Upon the pommel, when all else was finished, he would finally fix his own rune, a rune of many charms, and the mark of the Falthiri blade.

Great were the swords that Falthir forged. It is said that in battle the full fury of the forge's fire they recalled, and sizzled and spat their way through lines of men. One would glow at the crest of a victorious charge, and several who had been there had said that they had heard a song, clear and ringing, high and terrible, when Theurg had lifted the Falthiri blade to meet the onslaught of the worm beneath the crag of Nekthun. In that hour was the forge of Falthir glorified, that its swords could slay the dragon upon whose scales had been splintered the greatest of the world's blades.

Indeed, all of Falthir's swords had been great. Yet tonight, he had said, tonight he would forge for himself his greatest sword.

For an hour now, Kthun had been studying the actions of his master. That is how he learned all he knew of runecraft: Falthir showed him much but told him little. Kthun had learned to watch Falthir very carefully. Yet now it puzzled him that the great smith should need to be looking in the old leather-bound volume; it was a catalogue of runes, and yet what charm in all the art of forging could be unknown to Falthir himself?

He watched him closely, and the apprentice began to discern something in the countenance of his master. He could not name it precisely, yet the face of Falthir seemed to have gathered up new lines, and been washed with a kind of paleness that ill befitted his usual gruff bearing.

The smith finally closed the book after copying, as Kthun saw even from a distance, a line of ten runes. Walking slowly to his high bench, Falthir began to cut the runes into a bar of cold grey steel. Cautiously, guiding one hand with the other, he scribed the first, and anointed it with a special light oil that he kept for the best swords. Kthun had heard that it was an oil of the dragon, with special charms, but he was not sure. Yet it was obviously valuable; Falthir kept it in a tight glass vial when he was not using it, and he used it only sparingly when he used it at all. Now he set to cutting the second charm, and now the third.

"Alvthri, eddhun," he said, and Kthun thought he sensed a distraction in his voice, and a vague shadow of a trembling. Slowly the apprentice arose, walked quietly nearer to where the smith stood cutting the fourth rune. Falthir, as usual, paid him no heed, but looked intently from the piece of parchment with the inscription to the metal and back again. "Eglerithuin," came his voice, as from far away, as he dipped his finger in the oil-pan.

The fifth rune he cut now, and then began the sixth. Kthun's eyes wandered over the pattern. But something was wrong with that sixth rune. It was an unbalanced rune, somehow. Something was indeed wrong with it and about it. He watched the steady hand of Falthir trace the strokes of it over the bar of grim steel. Yet it seemed to the boy that the elder hand shook--so slightly, yet enough to be perceptible. Of a sudden impulse Kthun asked Falthir, "What is wrong with that rune, Derfir?"

Falthir's crusty fingers whitened slightly as he gripped the scribe still more tightly, yet it was a while before he spoke. "Wrong, Glichun! It is a beaten-rune, forged into the metal."

"No--I know that." Too well he knew that. Why did Falthir speak of what they obviously both knew? Bewildered, he decided to rephrase his question. "No, Derfir; it is the very rune itself. What is wrong with it? It looks somehow--I just--" He dared not finish his statement. Falthir had made an end to the sixth rune, and now met his questioning with a countenance glazed with flame. Kthun bowed, and Falthir turned slowly back to his work. As he withdrew slowly to watch from farther away, Kthun saw his master shudder again, but this time it was a convulsion of the entire body, almost violent. Kthun watched on in silence.

At length the voice of Falthir broke the tense silence. "Kthun-glich?"

"Yes, Derfir?"

"Lay a fire in the forge. Make it well. I will begin to forge this tonight."

Kthun, somewhat disappointed that he had not been told any more of the rune, withdrew to the forge to comply. High he piled the little coals, and hot he built the fire. Almost before he was through, his master tossed down his scribe, caught up the bar, and walked to the fire. He examined it closely before swiftly plunging the metal among the coals. Yet in that short time before he did so Kthun, still endeavoring to learn all he could of runecraft, saw upon that stock which Falthir held not the ten runes that were on the parchment, but nine. Did Falthir know? Had he made a mistake? Kthun was about to point it out when he remembered that he had provoked Falthir once today; doing it again might awaken a fearful wrath: he kept his silence.

MR1

The force of the beaten-rune takes effect from the hammer's first blow upon red steel; that is well known. Carefully Kthun watched now as Falthir drew the metal from the fire to see it at its proper hue. He had seen charmed forgings before. They were often fraught with strange occurrences, none of which ever seemed to surprise Falthir, but which were a source of constant amazement to his apprentice. Sometimes showers of sparks of many colors would fly forth and seem to dance all about. Sometimes the very steel would seem to be aflame, or it would writhe as if it were a living thing. Sometimes at the first blow an energy was released seemingly beyond any understanding. He had seen Falthir, no small man, thrown across the room by the blind fury of his own charms.

Yet nothing had prepared Kthun for what was to happen. Falthir placed the bare steel on the giant anvil and lifted his heavy hammer above his head. For an instant he paused, and though his back was turned to Kthun, the boy saw in his mind an image of the face of the great smith wincing for a moment, as if anticipating pain or some great occurrence.

Before the vision had faded in Kthun's mind, Falthir brought the hammer down with a ringing crash squarely among the runes of the bar. Then, straightening and standing tall and mighty, Falthir let go of the bar and left it lying on the anvil. For a second he stood, motionless.

Now, whence Kthun never could recall, there appeared three dark masses on the opposite side of the anvil, proceeding, it seemed, somehow from the bar itself, and drawing shadows from it rather than from the forge's fire. They gradually solidified into shaped forms. Dark and menacing, that they were men was impossible, yet they had heads and chests and arms. They were far greater than any man, however, towering above Falthir. Also, they had no legs: they seemed to rise out of a formless mist of darkness. Even the formed parts appeared somewhat insubstantial. Yet in their hands they held huge hammers which looked very real and very heavy.

Falthir began to speak to them, or rather at them, in a tongue Kthun had not heard ever before. The shapes, positioned where Kthun, having withdrawn to the shadows, could have seen their faces had they had any features so distinct as to make any real faces, moved closer to the anvil, their hammers raised high. Closer and closer they came, and Falthir pointed boldly at the stock and uttered a few more words; commands, it seemed to Kthun. Then in single accord, the three brought their hammers down in a great wide sweeping arc—unerringly into Falthir's skull. Wordlessly the smith crumpled, and his mangled head hit the stained boards of the floor and was still.

Huddled in the corner, Kthun watched in horror. Falthir, his master, the great smith, Falthir, so instantly stricken. He could not comprehend it. How had he fashioned his own doom? What had been his error? The thought of the nine runes, and the sixth, flashed across his mind, and he was sickened. Had his own disturbing interruption caused a fatal error to be wrought? Yet now he watched with growing wonder and terror as the three dark shapes ignored the fallen smith and turned instead to the forge.

With demonic fury they began to work the blade, two hammering together while the third kept the fire burning at its hottest. Slowly flames began to rise, and the one who acted as the fire-tender bent over them, and seemed to speak to them, causing them to rise even higher, until they licked at his arms. Kthun was certain that he must be incinerated, yet he seemed to pay no heed to himself. Only the forge's fire was his care, and it

became soon enough apparent that it did not hurt him at all. With his hand he turned the flames back into the coals, and they glowed yet more brightly.

Now the hammers rang again, furiously, insanely. They crashed on the anvil, and the air sang with their voices, high, shrill, and sharp. The tireless rhythm broke only that the metal should be plunged once more into the forge; and now it was out again and the hammers were at it.

Kthun saw now that Falthir had been right: this would probably be the greatest blade ever begun by the hand of man. It was boldly shaped, strong and heavy, and, unlike any sword Kthun had ever before seen made, out of a single piece of metal. Yet the question now pressed itself upon him: who would wield it, and to what end? And the pounding went on, and on.

Suddenly, without warning, it stopped. Kthun heard then a voice which seemed to come, he later thought, more from everywhere in general than anywhere in particular, though one of the forge-demons seemed to be speaking it, an incantation or cry, as he plunged the hammer with its wooden haft into the still rising fire and, drawing it out, brought it down, blazing, upon the pommel. The hammer cracked into smoldering bits and a scream tore into the air as the flames leaped to kindle an unconsuming fire on the pommel which quickly ran the length of the blade. Then, leaping upon the fallen body of Falthir, the creature lifted the sword high above his head. From the blade, flames leaped up to kindle the beams. There was the sound of three separate booming laughers, and a shrill cry, and the three rushed out the doorway under the stars. A shout of defiance rang out and the building shuddered.

Kthun crept from the shadows to the door and peered around the post to see where the three shapes had gone, and whether there was a chance of escaping the building, fast burning, without being detected. To his dismay and yet to his great wonder, he saw that the three were just a short way outside the door, and that they were completely still.

Somewhat preoccupied in trying to figure out how to get from the rapidly burning structure without being seen, Kthun nevertheless looked at them, and then a movement attracted his attention to a point beyond. About twenty feet from the doorway, by the ancient well, he saw a shadow. Then by the flames he discerned that it was a hooded figure; the face could not be seen. In its right hand the figure held aloft a staff, before it the three had retreated and bent down. Perhaps, thought Kthun, he was their master. Perhaps he was the true murderer of Falthir. A rage and violence welled up within Kthun, yet he still clung to the diminishing safety of the burning building.

Before he could decide on anything, however, a rafter came crashing down but a few feet behind him. He was tempted to flee blindly out the door and simply run. In desperation he looked up to find the quickest and most protected way into the dark woods that came within thirty feet of the shop, where he thought he might be afforded some safety. His fear of the fire tugged at him to dash out, and his fear of the creatures, whatever they were, demanded that he first search out a way. So he peered out into the firelit night once more.

They were not there. They had vanished, and, Kthun noticed as he plunged through the door as an arrow flies when it is just released, so also had the hooded shape vanished. Kthun stopped at the well, on almost the same spot where the hooded one had been standing, and he looked back towards the shop. A ways inside the door, by the anvil, he could yet see there on the floor the hand of Falthir, still in the ruddy glow. Then a choking and melting together of fear and pain came upon him and he plunged toward the black woods and ran far into the trackless night.

Parma Eldalamberon is the journal of the Mythopoeic Linguistic Fellowship, interested in all matters linguistic and philological. The first issue contains an extensive Glossary of Old Solar by Joe R. Christopher; a new phonemic mode for writing English in the Tengwar; two (count 'em!) articles by Robert Foster on the intricacies of Anglo-Saxon and LotR; a new (we hope) theory of archaic Sindarin plurals; and divers bits of etymological trivia concerning the tongues of Middle-earth and Deep Heaven. Parma Eldalamberon/The Book of the Elven Tongues is 12pp. offset for 50¢, and is available from Paula Marmor, 8339 Pierce Drive, Buena Park, California 90620. Come learn the lost name of Aragorn!

## A Limerick

An Aussie-and-artist named Assle  
Drew illos of Winnie so facile,

But "Pool" they all cried,  
"Importation denied--

"You're bringing koalas to Newcastle!"

by J. R. Christopher  
from a pun by Nan Braude

mrl

# MIRTH PAGE

Solve this criss-cross "Narnia" puzzle by filling the words provided into their proper places. The first word is already filled in. Solving time: 30 minutes

## Two Letters

IN  
UP

## Three Letters

APE  
EVE (daughters of)  
HOW (Aslan's)  
OWL  
SEA  
WED

## Four Letters

AGES  
RISM  
DEER  
FAUN  
LAMP  
~~LACE (Battle)~~  
LION  
LUCY  
POST  
TASH  
WOOD

## Five Letters

ASLAN  
CHARM  
GIANT  
JADIS  
JILL P.

NYMPH  
PETER  
PHIAL  
SUSAN

## Six Letters

EDMUND  
FLEDGE  
GNOMES  
NARNIA\*  
RILIAN  
TIRIAN  
WIGGLE (Marshes)

## Seven Letters

BATTLES (of Beruna)  
CASPIAN  
EUSTACE

## Ten Letters

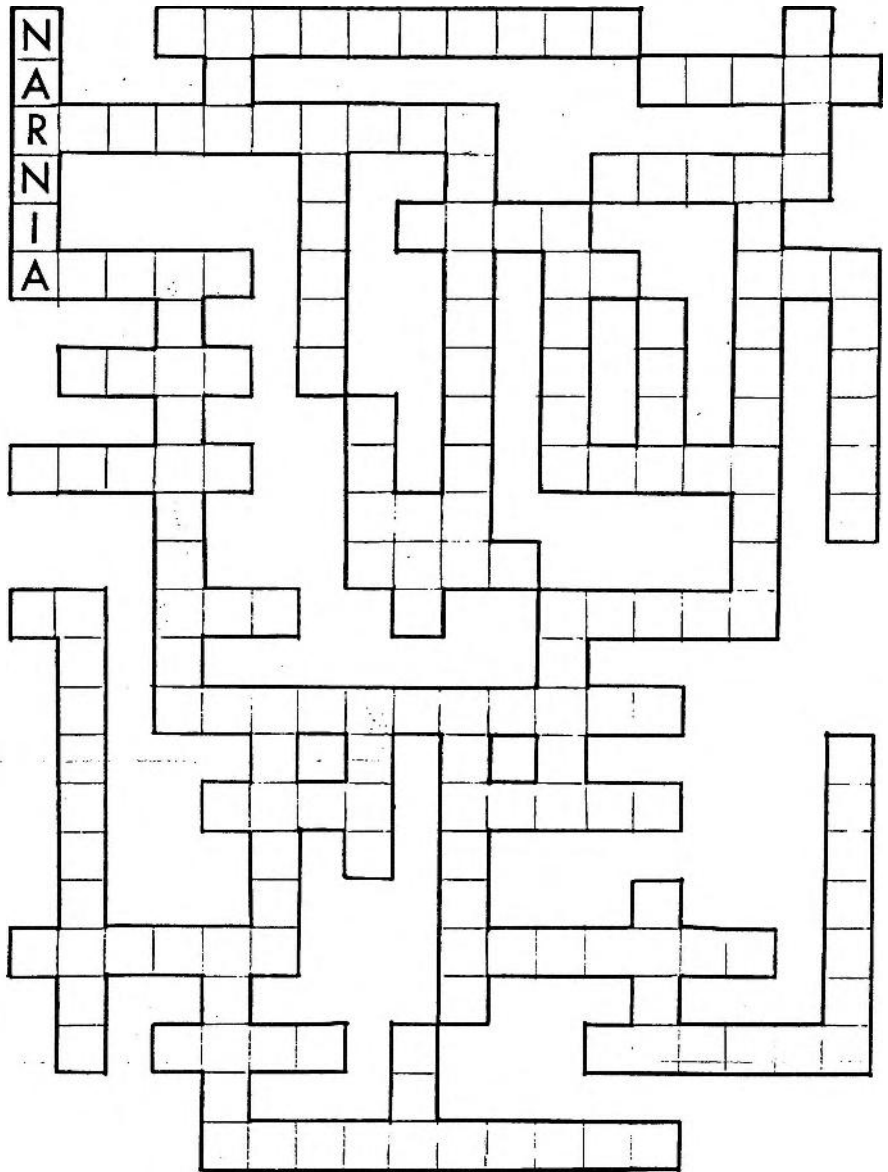
ARCHENLAND  
PUDDLEGLUM  
RED DWARVES  
REEPICHEEP  
STONE TABLE  
TELMARINES  
WHITE WITCH

## Eleven Letters

DAWN TREADER



When the straw broke the camel's back, it gave him a dromedary strain.



## Loch Ness from p.7

on the beach echoed in his ears. He had been too enraptured with her beauty to listen to all she had said then.

"Be seated," Shorala spoke to George, "and listen with an open ear and heart."

He sat down in a chair of sea blossoms and turned his eyes towards the throne.

"Many hundreds of years ago the earth was plagued with Sea Dragons and Land Dragons," Shorala began. "There were huge creatures roaming far and wide, destroying land and lives. The High Wizards called a Great Council of the Enchanted, though this has been forgotten by many in these days. This Council brought the people of Earth and Middle Earth together for the first time. We realized that each had Sea and Land Dragons. Something was needed. It was at last

agreed that Earth would take all of the Sea Dragons if Middle Earth would take all of the Land Dragons.

"Because of this, the Great Sea Dragon, Prade, has been in the North Sea for many years. Prade has been asleep, because Sea Dragons sleep for five hundred years at a time, when they bother to sleep at all, but soon, our fortune tellers say, Prade will awaken."

Shorala stopped to let her words penetrate.

George was very confused as to his association with all this. After all, what could he, a mere man, do against a Sea Dragon? He began to wonder why she had summoned him. A fear began to sweep through his body, yet he wanted to help the Sea Kingdom he loved. The silence was heavy upon him. He wondered what she was going to tell him next. (to be concluded.)

MR1



